

DREDGE OYSTERS.

The total landings for the 1934 season amounted to 52,254 sacks, as compared with 42,176 sacks for the previous one. The same fleet of seven steamers was operating, but a greater number of voyages were made and the average quantity landed per voyage was somewhat higher than in 1933. The quantity of canned oysters exported during the year shows a decline, 95,270 lb. as against 128,028 lb. for 1932-33. The quantity of fresh oysters exported from Bluff rose to 206,660 dozen, from 102,980 dozen for 1932-33.

TOHEROAS.

No opportunity occurred for visiting the two most important toheroa regions—the Ninety-mile Beach and the North Kaipara Beach—but from reports received it would appear that as a whole the stocks on each of these beaches are being maintained satisfactorily, though the more accessible and therefore more frequented areas of the North Kaipara Beach are still deficient as compared with former years. The two canneries were in operation during the winter and spring season and six licenses were taken out for commercial digging on the North Kaipara Beach during the year. The toheroa population of the Muriwai Beach is reported to be maintaining its former abundance only at a distance of ten to twenty miles from the road entrance at the southern end, with a satisfactory proportion of the younger year-groups. The beaches on the west coast between Waikanae and the Manawatu are still carrying good supplies of toheroas, especially on the Waitarere Beach near Levin, but the beds are narrow compared with those of North Auckland and there is apparently a relative shortage of the younger stages.

On a visit to the Waitarere Beach in March, 1925, the Marine Biologist saw evidence of a recent mortality among the toheroas which was estimated to have amounted to about 30,000 to the mile. He considers the cause to have been the long-continued conditions of drought during the previous months which had greatly reduced, if not entirely stopped, the normal seepage of fresh water from the back of the sandhills to the beach, which drainage is necessary for the maintenance of adequate supplies of diatomaceous or other minute algae food for the toheroas. The surviving toheroas were thin and ill-nourished in appearance. The mortality was local and did not affect the whole of the toheroa area.

The beds on the Ohope Beach near Whakatane are reported to be depleted of toheroas of large size, and it would appear that the prescription of a close season by regulation and provision of the means of enforcing the regulations would have beneficial results.

WHITEBAIT.

The tabulated statement below gives a general view of the principal waters fished and the productivity of the fishery for the 1934 season.

Whitebait Fishery.

Inspector's Centre.	Rivers fished.	Method of Fishing.	Fishing began	Best Month.	Number of Fishermen. (Approximate.)		Total Quantity caught. (Approximate.)
					Whole Time.	Part Time.	
Auckland ..	Waikato .. ..	Hand-nets ..	22nd July	Early October ..	60	50	Cwt. 645
Auckland ..	Kaituna and Maketu	Hand-nets ..	14th July	August – September	40	20	51
Auckland ..	Matata and Tarawera (Bay of Plenty)	Hand-nets ..	7th July ..	October ..	56	36	122
Napier ..	Tukituki, Ngaruroro, Wairoa	Set-nets ..	July ..	October ..	25	40	19
New Plymouth and Waitara	Mimi, Urenui, Mokau, Waitara, Waiwakaiho, &c.	Set and hand nets	August ..	August ..	..	100	171
Foxton ..	Manawatu .. ..	Set-nets ..	July ..	October ..	5	20	23
Blenheim ..	Wairau, Opawa, Tua Marina, and Rose's Overflow	Hand-nets ..	September	November ..	20	200	100
Westport ..	Buller, Orawaiti, Moki- hinui	Hand-nets ..	August ..	October ..	5	40	489
Greymouth ..	Teremakau, Grey, and New River	Set and hand nets	August ..	October – early November	60	200	266
Hokitika ..	Hokitika, Teremakau, Arahura, Mahinapua Creek, Waimea, Totara, Waitaha	Set and hand nets	August ..	October – early November	..	145	880
Matainui ..	Maori, Jacobs, Wai- tangi, Wanganui	Set-nets ..	1st Septem- ber	October ..	14	..	154
Christchurch	Ashley, Waimakariri, Salt Water Creek, Avon, Styx, Heath- cote	Set and hand nets	August ..	October ..	..	80	156
Dunedin ..	Mataura, Oreti, Clutha, Jacobs, Taieri, Wai- kouaiti	Hand-nets ..	September	October ..	(?)	(?)	76
Invercargill ..	Mataura, Oreti, Apa- rima, Makarewa	Set and hand nets	August ..	September–Octo- ber	100	150	89
Total ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,241